

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

1. (Original) A man-machine interface method comprising:

generating physical interactions with active zones belonging to an interface object, said active zones being associated with predetermined items of information;

detecting the active zones at which said interactions occur by measuring at least one physical magnitude; and

associating each detected interaction with the predetermined item of information corresponding to the active zone where said interaction has been detected;

the method wherein the active zones are defined for a predetermined finite length of time and then deactivated at the end of said predetermined length of time; and

when interactions with said interface object are detected while said active zones are deactivated, said active zones are redefined automatically and successively as a function of the first successively-detected interactions.
2. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein an interactions are detected with the interface object while said active zones are deactivated, said active zones are automatically redefined only if a predetermined initial sequence of successive interactions is detected.
3. (Original) A method according to claim 2, in which said predetermined initial sequence of interactions comprises two successive interactions at a single location on the interface object, within a time interval shorter than a predetermined duration.

4. (Original) A method according to claim 3, in which the location of said two successive interactions determines a first active zone.
5. (Original) A method according to claim 2, in which, during a stage of redefining active zones subsequent to said initial sequence, a predetermined number K of active zones are defined in succession at the locations of the K first interactions to be detected after said initial predetermined sequence of interactions.
6. (Original) A method according to claim 5, in which the stage of redefining the active zones is interrupted if no following interaction is detected during a predetermined timeout after a detected interaction.
7. (Original) A method according to claim 5, in which during the stage of redefining active zones, an interaction is detected in an active zone when the measured physical magnitude is subject to a variation that is greater than a first predetermined limit, and after said stage of redefining active zones, an interaction is detected in an active zone when the measured physical magnitude is subject to a variation greater than a second predetermined limit that is itself less than the first limit.
8. (Original) A method according to claim 5, in which during the stage of redefining active zones, an interaction is detected in an active zone when the measured physical magnitude is subject to a variation for a duration that is longer than a first predetermined limit duration, and after said stage of redefining active zones, an interaction is detected in an active zone when the measured physical magnitude is subject to a variation for a duration that is longer than a second predetermined limit duration, itself shorter than the first limit duration.
9. (Original) A method according to claim 1, in which when interactions with the interface object are detected while the active zones are deactivated, the P first detected interactions are recorded during a recording stage, where P is a predetermined non-zero

integer, and Z active zones are automatically redefined as a function of said first P detected interactions, where Z is a non-zero integer less than P, corresponding to interactions detected in different zones, and then the predetermined items of information corresponding to the P first detected interactions are determined.

10. (Original) A method according to claim 9, in which the recording stage is interrupted if one of the P first interactions is not followed by a following interaction within a time period shorter than a predetermined timeout duration.

11. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the interactions with the interface object are detected while the active zones are deactivated, the P first detected interactions are recorded during a recording stage, where P is a non-zero integer, said recording stage terminating when the interaction P is substantially identical to the first interaction of the recording stage, and P-I active zones are automatically redefined as a function of said P first detected interactions corresponding to interactions detected in different zones, and then the predetermined items of information corresponding to the P-I redefined active zones are determined, with said items of information depending on the number P-I.

12. (Original) A method according to claim 1, in which the set of active zones is subdivided into a plurality of groups of active zones, and when interactions with the interface object are detected in an active zone belonging to a group of deactivated active zones, said active zones of said group of active zones are redefined automatically and successively in a manner that is independent from the other groups of active zones.

13. (Original) A method according to claim 1 in which, when interactions are detected with the interface object while said active zones are deactivated, said active zones are redefined automatically and successively as a function of the first interactions to be successively detected, and the detected interactions are associated substantially simultaneously with the predetermined items of information.

14. (Original) A method according to claim 1, in which the measured physical magnitude is selected from a soundwave, a mechanical strain, a quantity of back-scattered light, and an electric field.
15. (Original) A man-machine interface device specially adapted to implement a method according to claim 1.
16. (Original) A method according to claim 3, in which, during a stage of redefining active zones subsequent to said initial sequence, a predetermined number K of active zones are defined in succession at the locations of the K first interactions to be detected after said initial predetermined sequence of interactions.
17. (Original) A method according to claim 4, in which, during a stage of redefining active zones subsequent to said initial sequence, a predetermined number K of active zones are defined in succession at the locations of the K first interactions to be detected after said initial predetermined sequence of interactions.
18. (Original) A method according to claim 16, in which the stage of redefining the active zones is interrupted if no following interaction is detected during a predetermined timeout after a detected interaction.
19. (Original) A method according to claim 17, in which the stage of redefining the active zones is interrupted if no following interaction is detected during a predetermined timeout after a detected interaction.
20. (Original) A method according to claim 6, in which during the stage of redefining active zones, an interaction is detected in an active zone when the measured physical magnitude is subject to a variation that is greater than a first predetermined limit, and after said stage of redefining active zones, an interaction is detected in an active zone

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when the measured physical magnitude is subject to a variation greater than a second predetermined limit that is itself less than the first limit.